

Most Wicked, Cruel, Bloody,
and Barbarous News

FROM

READING

IN

BARK-SHIRE:

BEING

A full and true Relation of a horrible Murder
committed by *William Hasker*, on the person
of his own Father, almost six years ago.

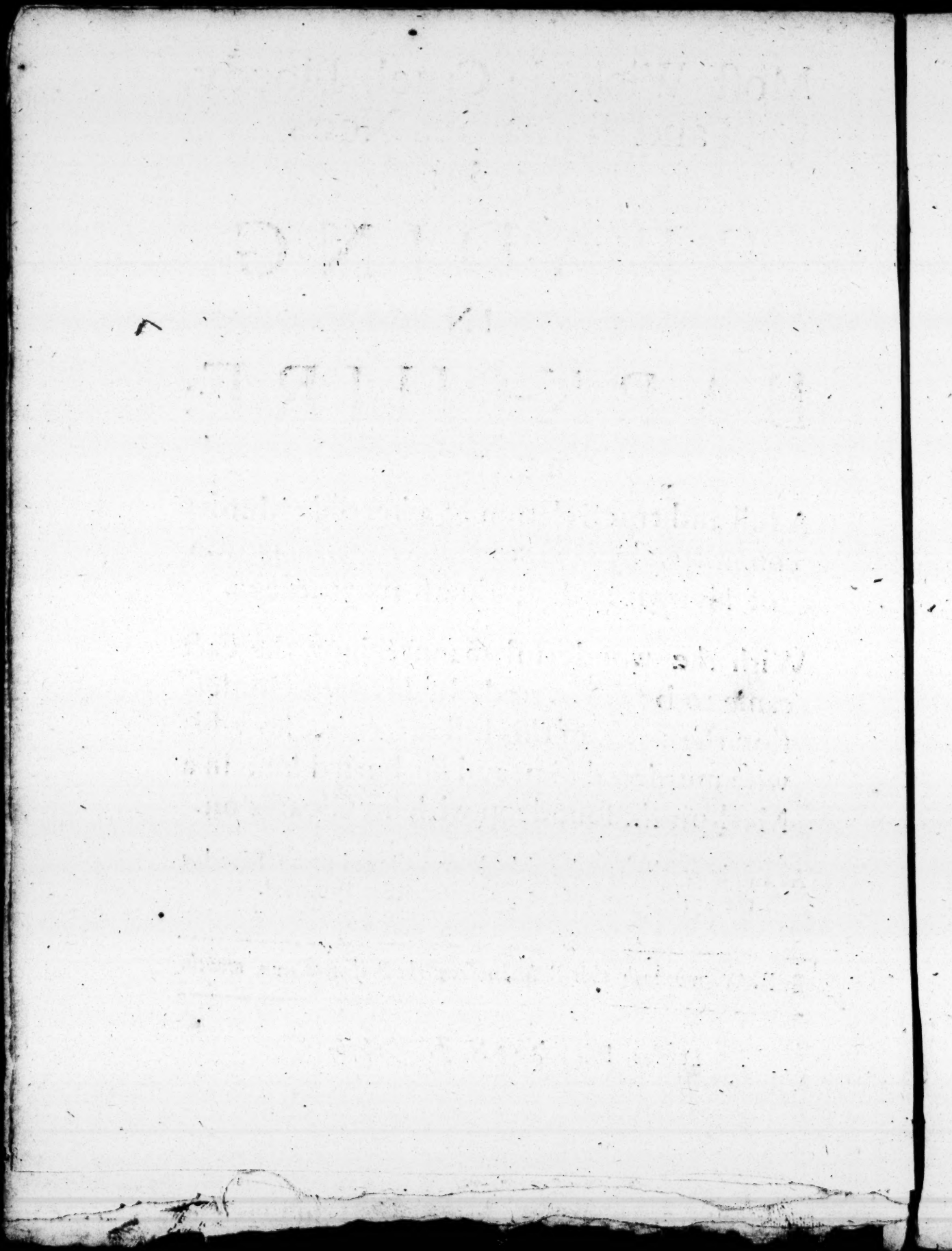
With the wonderful manner how the Fact
came to be discovered, by his own Confes-
sion the 15th. of this instant *July*; how his
wife murdered him, and he buried him in a
Marl-pit six foot deep with his Cloaths on.

As also how the murdered body was digged up on Monday
the 17th of this instant *July*, and decently buried.

By R. W. who took this Relation from the Prisoners own mouth:

London, Printed for N. J. 1676.

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Bloody and Barbarous

NEWS

FROM

Berkshire.

THis *William Harker*, of whom I am about to relate this most bloody and unnatural deed, was a Husbandman, and lived with his father at a Village called *Brimton*, about five miles from *Newbury*, and about ten miles from *Reading*, and about a mile out of the Road that goes between *Bristol* and *London*. The poor old man that was murdered, was by Trade a Tanner, and had some small matter of money and goods, which it is generally believed was the chief cause of his coming to this untimely end.

But the first beginning of this malice of this wicked wretch against his own Father, by his own confession was his Wife; for he had married a wife which it seems was none of the honestest, at which his Father was very much displeased,

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and turned them out of doors : But such was his Fatherly Love to his Son, having no more Children but he, soon took them both in again ; little thinking, poor Soul, what Snakes he harboured in his bosom ! But he quickly found his mistake ; For his Son being of an incorrigible disposition, instead of being dutiful to his Father, grew worse and worse, and oft-times gave him very wicked words and threats ; which it seems the Old-man did report again to some of his Neighbours : Also his Daughter-in-Law did very much abuse him, till between them both he was made away, and could not be heard of again by all the means that could be used, which was very much ; the Country being at great charges, to search in Ponds and Rivers, and to dig in several places for him ; but all to no purpose for almost six years time, till it pleased God to bring it out by their own confession : Therefore my desire is to all, whose wicked hearts are set upon Murder, by the Devils instigation that it may be done so privately that it will never come out, not to believe that false and malicious enemy of Mankind, for he is continually setting Traps and Snares for your precious and Immortal Souls. For if it could be done so privately, that no mortal Eye should come to the knowledge of it ; yet let them remember, that there is an All-seeing God, that will surely bring them to an account for it ; but it is very seldom that Murder, although it long lye hid, is unpunished in this world as well as in that which is to come ; but this by the by.

But

But now to proceed in my Relation of this horrid deed, the Neighbours taking notice of the undutiful carriage of this Raskal to his Father, began to suspect some further mischief; therefore the Old-man being missing, they caused his unnatural Son to be apprehended, upon suspicion of murdering his Father, and so he was committed to *Reading-Goal*, which was about three weeks before last *Michaelmas* was five years; so at the next *Lent-Affises* he was arraigned for murdering his Father, and he pleaded not guilty: The chief witness that was against him, was to this effect, One swore that the Old-man told him a little before he was missing, that his Son took up a Hatchet and caught him by the Beard, and swore that he would beat his Brains out. Another swore that he met with him that Night after his Father was missing, going with a Spade towards the *Marlpits*. Another produced a bloody cord, which was found in the house when he was apprehended, so the Jury brought him in guilty, and he received Sentence of death: But was repriev'd upon this account, the Judge that then sat upon Life and Death was the reverend B. T. who is since deceased, who some certain years before at *Gloucester*, gave Sentence against several Persons for murdering of a Man, whereof one or two were hanged in Chains, and several years after the man came home alive, and caused these men to be taken down and buried; upon which it is said that the Judge made a solemn promise, never to let any man suffer upon circumstance again, and therefore gave order that he should be kept in Prison, till he had either confessed the Murder, or the Body was found.

So

So he having lain a Prisoner in *Reading-Goal* ever since, now mark the wonderful Providence of Almighty God, to bring this wicked Murder to light; about last *Christmass* one *John sumpter*, a Prisoner in the said Goal, and this *William Haskker*, had a falling out; whereupon the said *Sumpter* accused him, and said, that when the said *William Haskker* was sick of the small Pox, he confessed to him that he murdered his Father, and that his Wife was privy to the Murder: But the said *John sumpter* lying for his Discharge, could not give Oath against him; but being since freed, he took his Oath of it before a Justice of the Peace. Whereupon a Warrant was granted out, for the apprehending of this *Haskker's* Wife.

Now it seems this Woman a little before was delivered of a Child, of which her Husband says he was none of the Father, and grievously threatned what he would do to her, if ever he got out of the Goal; and she being sensible of her Husbonds cruel nature, when she came before the Justice, thinking to make sure of him, the Justice promising her all favour, if she would tell him what she knew concerning the Murder of her Father-in-Law; she confessed that her Husband killed him and buried him, but she could not tell where, for she was not at home at that time; so the Justice took Bail for her, and let her go home. But when this news came to her Husband, that his Wife had confessed to the Justice, that he had murdered his Father: Oh, said he, has the Whore a mind to have another Husband! she shall taste of the same Cup that I drink off, for now I will confess the truth, which I never thought to

to have done ; which was taken from his own mouth the 15th. of this instant *July*.

That about three weeks before last *Michaelmas* was five years, coming into his house about ten a clock on a Monday morning, his wife was crying; he asked her, what was the reason of her crying? she told him that she was undone; and if he did not stand her friend, she was a dead woman; for said she Your Father came in hectoring and swearing, and give me a kick; whereupon I threw the four pound Weight at him, and killed him: He told her that for the love of her he would put his own life in jeopardy, and so presently sent her and her child away to a Neighbours house, till he had disposed of the dead Body of his Father; and so he went and took the Body, and laid it in the Cloaths, and wrapped the Head about with a Blanket, because there should be no sign of the Blood, till he had considered of a private place to bury him; after he had digged a grave, he went and fetcht his Horse, and laid him overthwart, and tied him with a Cord, which was the same that was brought against him at the Assizes, when he was first arraigned for the Fact, the said Cord being all bloody; but the Body not lying upon the Horse according to his minde, he fetcht a Cart and put the Horse in, and so drew the Body to a place called *Sheeps-bridge*, being about a Mile from his House, and then took the Body upon his Back, and carried it about a Furlong further, and buried it in a *Marl-pit*, about six foot deep, with his Cloaths on,

So on the Monday morning, being *July* the 7th. 1676. they carried him a Horse-back, with his Legs chained under the Horse's belly, to show them the place where he buried his Father ; which he did , and they found the Body, as he said, not one whit wasted : So the Coroner sate on him the next day, and caused him to be buried in the Church-yard, and a day or two after his Wife was brought to *Reading*. Goal, her Bail refusing to be any longer bound for her. VVhere we will leave them both, to expect the just Reward of their barbarous Crimes ; desiring of the Lord that none that hear or read this sad Relation, may fall into the like Crimes.

F I N I S.